

was similarly altered. From a Church politician he was rapidly becoming a theological reformer. The Pope had issued bulls against him as a heretic, and had brought him to a second trial at Lambeth. Embittered by this assault, he had conceived an almost personal hatred for Gregory the Eleventh, and had commenced a series of violent counterattacks. His quarrel with the Papacy was accompanied by dangerous novelties. The friars naturally became alarmed. The cause of their late union with Wycliffe, the temporary prominence of the question of evangelical poverty, was gone. They found that their ally had incurred the censures of their master, and that he had replied to those censures with defiance and contumely. He was bringing into the world heresies without number, while the friars were the militia of orthodoxy. He was urging his friends to translate the Bible, and his fellow-countrymen to read it in English, while the friars had set their face against the propagation of biblical knowledge among the vulgar. Wandering preachers had begun to appear in the villages with versions of Wycliffe's doctrines and to compete with the local influence of their enemies. The exact stages by which the quarrel proceeded are unknown to us, but it was about 1379 that Wycliffe openly attacked the ideal of the mendicant's life as a false ideal, declared the taking of religious vows in a special order to be without basis in Scripture, and invited all monks and friars to return to the simple <sup>f</sup> sect of Christ.<sup>1</sup> All these sources of quarrel had arisen before his heresy on the question of Transubstantiation gave his enemies a further handle against him.<sup>1</sup> The reformer's friends within the pale of the four orders were persecuted; some fled from their captivity, renounced the garb and became its most bitter opponents.<sup>2</sup> The main body of the friars, eager to stamp out Lollardry wherever it appeared, were forced to prosecute their enemies before episcopal tribunals, and for this reason, if for none other, had to behave with more consideration to bishops. Wycliffe himself noticed that one effect of his attack was to heal the standing quarrel between the friars and the secular clergy. ' Our Bishops are said once to have hated the false

<sup>1</sup> See Ap. « *S. JB. W.* iii. 368; *Men. Eve.*, 80-1; *Franciscans*, 591.